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First Lady and Secretary Bicha Honor Adoptive Parents

On Friday, nine parents received the 2008 Governor's Adoptive Parent Award for their remarkable commitment and dedication to the children of Wisconsin.

"The parents honored today come from families both large and small, but they all have opened their homes and their hearts to children who needed a safe and secure family," First Lady Jessica Doyle said. "The love these parents have shown reflects our commitment to putting children first in the State of Wisconsin."

During a ceremony at the Executive Residence hosted by the First Lady and Department of Children and Families Secretary Reggie Bicha, the following parents received the 2008 Governor's Adoptive Parent Award:

- Mary Hendrick of Portage County
- Loree and Keith Kramar of Waukesha County
- Wanda and Derrick Lewis of Milwaukee County
- Jane and Dale McKittrick of Rusk County
- Tiffany and Jon Turner of Bayfield County

The award winners were nominated by their local Post-Adoption Resource Centers for their remarkable work with adopted children, birth parents and local agencies.

"Children of all ages, living in all parts of the state need love, support and guidance," Secretary Bicha said. "It is a great privilege to celebrate the work of these parents who share this vision and have answered the call to care."

Jockey Being Family, Jockey International's corporate citizenship initiative, and Adoption Resources of Wisconsin (ARW) co-sponsored the event. Both organizations are collaborating with the First Lady and DCF on upcoming National Adoption Month activities.

"National Adoption Month gives us the opportunity to celebrate the amazing contributions adoptive parents make throughout the year," said Debra S. Waller, Chairman and CEO of

Jockey International. “Every child deserves a permanent and loving family, and we are committed to making this goal a reality.”

Although many families have made the commitment to adopt children in Wisconsin, adoption agencies are still looking to find permanent homes for approximately 600 children in the state.

“It’s so appropriate that we’re holding this luncheon right before Thanksgiving, because we are so grateful for these adoptive parents who believe, as we do, that every child deserves a place at the table,” said Colleen Ellingson, CEO of ARW.

For more information about adoption, please visit the ARW or DCF websites at www.wiadopt.com and www.dcf.wisconsin.gov. Find out more about Jockey Being Family at www.JockeyBeingFamily.com.